

Lowell Offering

Official Visitor Guide for 2011-2012

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lowell National Historical Park



The Hamilton Canal Redevelopment District

Jim Higgins

Park, City Preservation Efforts Achieving New Milestones

This year Lowell National Historical Park and the City of Lowell are celebrating an important milestone: the successful redevelopment of 80 percent of 5.2 million square feet of historic mill space. These figures represent achievements in mill preservation and redevelopment that were thought to be nearly impossible when the Park was conceived over thirty-three years ago.

Nineteenth-century Lowell was internationally known as a “model city” – a city whose success in jump-starting the American Industrial Revolution served as an inspiring blueprint for other communities to follow. Today, Lowell retains its legacy as “The Mill City” while simultaneously developing new strategic approaches for the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

The establishment of a National Park requires that a location represent “the best example” of a particular historic, natural or cultural resource. In addition, the location must represent elements fundamental to the history or character of the United States. These are not easy requirements for an average place to meet, let alone an entire city. Lowell’s historic mills, miles of canals, and its unparalleled history of industrial development and cultural influence elevated this place to National Park status in 1978.

Yet the modern rehabilitation of 80 percent of Lowell’s remaining mill space has established an entirely new element of national significance for the city and the Park. Very few, if any, communities in the United States have achieved

Lowell’s level of mill preservation. The adaptive-reuse of the city’s mills, redevelopment of canalways, and promotion of preservation tax credits have transformed Lowell into a new “model city” for the study of preservation and urban development in the 21st century.

This “model city” is still evolving. In the next five years additional adaptive-reuse projects are expected to push the total mill redevelopment rate to 95 percent. The public/private partnerships facilitated by the Park and the City represent a new model of preservation for both communities and National Parks alike. The Park and the city of Lowell have (once again) found themselves to be of the “best examples” in the United States.

Most Popular Attractions

- Boott Cotton Mills Museum
- Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit
- Canal & River Boat Tours
- Historic Trolley Tours
- The River Transformed Exhibit

Become a Junior Ranger

Ask any Ranger at the Visitor Center or the Boott Mill for a Junior Ranger Activity Book. Earn a badge and certificate.



Inside

Tour & Program Schedule	5-6
Exhibit Hours & Fees	6
Children’s Activities	7
Park News	8
Lowell Events	4
Volunteer Opportunities	3



Jim Higgins

Plan Your Visit

Lower Locks & Gatehouse

- We recommend you begin your visit at the Park Visitor Center, 246 Market St. Tours usually begin here. Free parking available.
- Park Rangers at the Visitor Center provide information on guided tours, attractions, and special events throughout Lowell.
- Tour reservations and additional information is available by calling (978) 970-5000. Visit us online at www.nps.gov/lowe/

Indoor Exhibits & Activities

- Visit the working 1920’s weave room in the **Boott Cotton Mills Museum**. Talk to weavers and park rangers, and tour the two floors of interactive exhibits.
- Explore the **Mill Girls and Immigrants Exhibit**. Step into the world and life of the Lowell mill girls and immigrants at the boardinghouse.*
- Watch the two educational history films at the **Visitor Center** and the **Boott Cotton Mills Museum**.
- Look, listen and learn about the tremendous power of water at the **River Transformed Exhibit**.*
- Additional exhibit and activity information at the **Visitor Center**.

Outdoor Exhibits & Activities

- Attend a guided ranger tour by foot, trolley, and/or boat. Offered rain or shine. Tours* start at **Visitor Center**.
- Stroll along the historic **Canalway** walking paths that encircle the downtown area. See historic structures, mills, gatehouses, locks, and dams.
- Experience the natural beauty of the **Northern Canal Walkway** and/or the historic **Pawtucket Falls**.*
- Stroll, bike, skate along the **Riverwalk**.
- Ride the historic **trolleys** around town.*
- Relax in the grass at **Boardinghouse Park** or **Kerouac Park**.
- Additional exhibit and activity information at the **Visitor Center**.

Local Attractions & Activities

- The Concord River Greenway
- The American Textile History Museum
- The New England Quilt Museum
- Whistler House Museum of Art
- National Streetcar Museum
- The Center for Lowell History
- Brush Art Gallery
- Pollard Memorial Library
- Vandenberg Esplanade

Food, Parking

- Numerous restaurants are located on Merrimack, Market, Middle & Palmer St.
- Free parking is available behind the **Visitor Center** in a lot off of Dutton St.
- Paid parking is available throughout the city in garages or on the street.

* Availability affected by season/weather.

About This National Park

The creation of Lowell National Historical Park in 1978 acknowledged Lowell’s significant contribution to the American Industrial Revolution. Lowell’s culture, environment, and historic manufacturing economy are influential pieces of our national heritage which ultimately changed American life.



The city and its textile mills represent the first large-scale planned industrial city in American history. 19th-century Lowell ushered in a new era of technical innovation in textile manufacturing, gave rise to the modern corporation, and developed one of America’s earliest urban working classes. Historically Lowell was also heralded as the “Venice of the United States” for its extensive, technologically advanced canal system.

Today, the Park is quite literally woven into the modern City of Lowell – a testament to the high integrity of Lowell’s historic and cultural landscape. The city’s recent preservation and economic renaissance has created a vibrant downtown, within a unique historical setting which presents numerous options for visitors to Lowell. An exploration of the city and its cultural amenities provides a deeper understanding of Lowell’s distinct heritage.

Today the National Park Service preserves Lowell’s ground-breaking history while simultaneously contributing to the current and future success of Lowell. The National Park Service preserves nationally important places such as the Statue of Liberty, Yellowstone, and Lowell for the enjoyment of current and future generations.



Joe Drapeau

Francis Gate & Guard Locks

Welcome

Lowell’s story of industrial and cultural transformation is a powerful, inspiring experience for our visitors. This year we are proud to welcome the 18th millionth visitor to the Park, the 1 millionth student to the Tsongas Industrial History Center, and the 2 millionth folkie to the Lowell Folk Festival. The restoration of Lowell’s mills continues this year with more than 80 percent of historic mill space now redeveloped for modern use. I hope you take the time to explore these mills, ride our trolley and tour Lowell’s historic canals. Enjoy your visit!

Michael Creasey
Park Superintendent

Exhibits



Visitor Center



Boott Cotton Mills Museum



The River Transformed Exhibit



The Pawtucket Falls & Historic Dam

Visitor Center

Begin your visit at Market Mills, the former Bigelow Carpet Company complex, one of the city’s original textile mills. At the Visitor Center, you can plan your exploration of the major park sites and the city’s rich industrial past. Make reservations for park tours and other programs, sign up for our Junior Ranger program, and shop in the museum store. General information on area lodging and dining is also available. *246 Market Street. Free.*

Visitor Center Films

Lowell: The Industrial Revelation, an award-winning film presentation, introduces visitors to the story of how people, technology, and capital came together to revolutionize textile production—and a way of life—in Lowell and other American cities. Also shown is *Lowell Blues*, a film by Henry Ferrini about author Jack Kerouac and his native city. *Free.*

Boott Cotton Mills Museum

Don’t miss the roar of a 1920’s weave room with operating power looms! The Park’s most popular exhibit includes the weave room, interactive exhibits, and video programs about the Industrial Revolution, labor, and the rebirth of Lowell. *Fees: Adults, \$6.00; Youth, 6-16 & Students \$3.00; Senior Discount; Children 5 and under free. Call for special group rates.*

Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit

Explore the history of “mill girls” and immigrants in a Boott Mills boardinghouse. This exhibit features a reproduction boardinghouse kitchen, dining room, and bedroom. The Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit, located in the Mogan Cultural Center, tells the human story of the Industrial Revolution by focusing on the lives of Lowell’s working people. *Free.*

“The River Transformed” Exhibit

The historic Wannalancit Mills features original 19th-century turbines and water raceways that are still visible to the public. Learn how industrialists and engineers viewed and harnessed the power of the Merrimack River to drive Lowell’s textile mills. Explore the history of the watershed, the human uses of the river system, and the impacts of industrialization on the river. *Site is open by tour only.*

Trolley Rides

Ride on a replica 1900’s trolley from site to site during your visit. The trolley provides transportation to the Visitor Center, Boott Cotton Mills Museum, Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit, “River Transformed” Exhibit at the Wannalancit Mills, and other attractions in Lowell. *The trolley runs daily March through November. Schedules available at Visitor Center, Boott Mill, and Trolley Stops. Free.*

Canalway, Riverwalk, Northern Canal Walkway

Numerous outdoor walking paths are available throughout the Park and the city. The Canalway leads you in a wide circle through the historic district along various canals. The Riverwalk traces the Merrimack River from the Boott Mills to LeLacheur Park. The Northern Canal Walkway takes you from the Wannalancit Mill all the way to the Pawtucket Falls/Dam. *The Northern Canal and Riverwalk are available weather and/or river level permitting. Check with a Ranger. Free.*

Gatehouses, Locks, Dams

The Park contains numerous historic gatehouses, locks and dams that regulate the flow of water and power into the city. You can visit the exterior of these resources by walking the Canalway. Some tours provide access to the interior of these buildings. *Check with a Ranger.*

Museum Stores

Own a Piece of History

Would you like to take home an authentic piece of Boott Mill cloth? Interested in picking up a book about Lowell? How about sending postcards to family and friends?



Browse through these items and the rest of our newly expanded merchandise in the Park’s two museum stores. The proceeds from bookstore sales directly support Park preservation and educational programming. Museum stores are located at Visitor Center (246 Market Street) and at Boott Cotton Mills Museum (115 John Street).

National Park Passport Stamps

The Passport Stamp program is one of the most popular activities in the national parks. The Passport book is perfect for planning a trip to visit our national parks and for saving your memories after you’ve left. If you don’t already own a Passport book, you can purchase one at any of the Park’s bookstores.



Collect all seven of the stamps available at Lowell NHP. Ask a ranger for details and locations.

Volunteer For Your National Parks

Are you fascinated by the music at the Lowell Folk Festival® or the Lowell Summer Music Series and would like to help? Do you want to improve the community by working with park rangers to clean up the canal system? Would you like to staff a historic building and speak with visitors? Consider becoming a volunteer at Lowell National Historical Park.



There are numerous opportunities for volunteers in administrative, development, creative, and educational capacities. We have volunteer positions available to satisfy a diverse array of skills and experience.

How to Volunteer

- Call the Volunteer Office at (978) 275-1740
- Send e-mail to Lowell_NHP_Volunteers@nps.gov
- Visit our website at <http://www.nps.gov/lowe>

Accessibility

Wheelchair accessible buildings include the Visitor Center, Boott Cotton Mills Museum, Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit, Mogan Cultural Center, Moody Street Feeder Gatehouse and the Wannalancit Mill. Curb-side drop off available at the Visitor Center (Market St & Shattuck St). Printed narrations of select audiovisual programs are available upon request.

Boats and trolleys are accessible to wheelchair users (one secure chair space per vehicle). When making reservations for programs, please inform us if your party will include a wheelchair.

Park News and Highlights



River & Canalway Improvements

Development of the Canalway and Riverwalk along Lowell’s 5.6-mile historic power canal system and Merrimack River ‘Mile of Mills’ has been a long standing goal of the Park. For the past 25-years the Park together with the City of Lowell, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and a host of other public/private partners has undertaken the incremental development of the Canalway and Riverwalk.

Two new areas along the Canalway and Riverwalk were completed this year: Spaulding Park on the Merrimack River and the Western Canalway – Moody Street Reach. Several new projects are currently underway, including the 1/3rd- mile long Western Canalway - Broadway to Moody Street project; the Swamp Locks Pedestrian Bridge; and the Hamilton Canal Walkway.

Public investment in these new projects totals \$8.5M bringing the overall investment in the development of the Canalway/Riverwalk over the past 25-years to \$55.2M. Development of the Canalway and Riverwalk has helped to reclaim the lost margins of these important urban resources, provided attractive amenities for interpretation and cultural programming, and made the canals and river banks accessible to Park visitors and local residents.

20 Years of Success at the Tsongas Industrial History Center



In October 2011, a unique and highly regarded educational organization, the Tsongas Industrial History Center, celebrates its twentieth anniversary with a year-long series of events. A collaboration between Lowell National Historical Park and the UMass Lowell Graduate School of Education, the Center provides curriculum-based, hands-on programs for students from grade three to adult. It also provides professional development programs for teachers from all over the United States.

As it turns twenty, the Center is not only looking back but also looking forward, creating a new program focused on innovation and engineering design, preparing a new teaching packet, revising its environmental education programs, and sprucing up its spaces in the Boott Cotton Mills Museum. The Center is likely to welcome its millionth visitor sometime in the coming school year!



Lowell Folklife Series

As part of a unique partnership with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Dr. Maggie Holtzberg has joined park staff as the resident folklorist and director of Cultural Programming.

Promoting cross-cultural understanding within the context of the Park is fundamental to telling the human story of Lowell. Holtzberg’s depth of experience and connections to ethnic and immigrant communities helped shape the Park’s new Lowell Folklife Series. Free and open to the public, the series offers a variety of interactive presentations on crafts, foodways, and performing arts year round.

Park staff also works with local cultural communities developing plans and projects to help share their own cultural traditions. The Lowell Folk Festival celebrates its 25th year in 2011 and park staff will curate the Folk Crafts & Foodways area of the festival. This year the focus is on the role apprenticeships have played in helping to sustain traditional craft in New England. Festival goers will meet eight master artists and their apprentices. Foodways demonstrations feature noodles and pasta by five home cooks who will share traditions, stories, recipes, and samples.

25 Years of the Lowell Folk Festival



This year The City of Lowell, the Lowell Festival Foundation, Lowell National Historical Park, the Greater Merrimack Valley Convention & Visitor Bureau and the National Council for the Traditional Arts are proud to present the 25th annual Lowell Folk Festival. With hundreds of thousands of visitors attending annually, the experience is an ever-changing atmosphere of live music, art, crafts, and culture. The Folk Festival has become an integral part of the City and the Park’s cultural landscape over the last twenty-five years.

Following the success of hosting the National Folk Festival in Lowell for three years, 1987-1989, the producing partners and community continued the excitement by launching the inaugural Lowell Folk Festival in 1990. The Lowell Folk Festival now looks forward to planning another twenty-five years of inspiring cultural entertainment for residents and visitors of all ages.

Refreshed Visitor Center

The Visitor Center got a major facelift in 2011. Making use of recycled and green materials, this brand new desk sits at the entrance providing easy access for visitors seeking information, tour reservations or other services. The facelift also includes new recycled flooring, high-efficiency LED lighting fixtures and new interior signage.

Twin high-definition displays now provide additional information about park offerings, special events and tour times on a continual basis. The newly redesigned Museum Store is stocked full of exciting new items to help you remember your trip to Lowell – glassware, t-shirts, hats, jewelry, books and our signature Boott Cotton Mills Towels – there’s something for everyone!



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lowell National Historical Park

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Children’s Activities



Summer Day Camp & Boat Tours



Children’s Concerts at Boarding House Park

July - August ,Wednesdays & Thursdays at 11am
The Lowell Summer Music Series offers free concerts for children throughout the summer. Local and regional artists bring fun and excitement to the outdoor stage at Boarding House Park. Concerts feature music, magic, juggling, and/or dancing. An enjoyable event for children and adults of all ages. *Free.*

Children’s Corner

Visit our Children’s Corner in the Park’s Visitor Center. Participate in hands-on activities to explore Lowell’s technology through gears and pulleys, or read a book together to learn about immigration, machinery, and much more. *Free.*

Trolley Rides

Ride on a replica 1900’s trolley from site to site during your visit. The trolley provides transportation to the Visitor Center, Boott Cotton Mills Museum, the “River Transformed” Exhibit, and the Mill Girls & Immigrants Exhibit. *Trolley runs daily March through November. Schedules available at Visitor Center, Boott Mill, and Trolley Stops. Free.*

Summer Day Camp with the Tsongas Industrial History Center

July - August
Boys and girls, ages 8 - 14, discover the roots of the American Industrial Revolution and explore the connections between science and history through water! Includes hands-on workshops, visits to historic sites, crafts, games, a trolley ride, and a boat trip on the Merrimack River. Each camp runs for one week, Monday- Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. July and August. Space is limited, preregistration is required. Cost is \$175/week. Information: (978)970-5080 | <http://www.uml.edu/Tsongas/>

Become a Junior Ranger

Pick up a Junior Ranger Activity Guide at the Visitor Center or the Boott Cotton Mills Museum. Explore the Park, complete the activities in the booklet and turn it in to become a Junior Ranger—including official badge and certificate. Answers to the activities can be found throughout the Park. *Free.*



Become a National Park Service WebRanger

What is a WebRanger?
A WebRanger is a care-taker, an adventurer, a learner, a seeker, a discoverer. A WebRanger could be...you! You can become a member of a growing group of young people who are interested in the world around them and involved with their nation’s heritage. WebRangers spread their knowledge of national parks to their friends, families, and schoolmates. Build your own ranger station, complete activities, and have fun!
Start your journey online: www.webrangers.us



Lowell Summer Music Series

June 18 - September 10, 2011



Lowell National Historical Park and the Lowell Festival Foundation present the 22nd Season of the Lowell Summer Music Series at Boarding House Park (corner of French & John Streets in downtown Lowell). The Lowell Summer Music Series features over 20 concert events including the free 31st Annual Banjo & Fiddle Contests. All show times are 7:30PM except Shakespeare’s Measure for Measure (4pm) and the Banjo & Fiddle Contests (12pm). All shows are affordable for the whole family; children 12 and under are admitted free.

In the event of rain, most performances move to Lowell High School auditorium, across the street from Boarding House Park. A few will be relocated to the Lowell Memorial Auditorium at 50 East Merrimack Street, just three blocks from the Park. Event parking is available at the John St. Garage.

Information: Call (978) 970-5200 or visit www.lowellsummermusic.org

Purchase Tickets: Tickets are available to purchase (with no surcharge) at the park Visitor Center and Boott Cotton Mills Museum Stores. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.lowellsummermusic.org

 CHRIS ISAAK SAT, JUNE 18	 INDIGO GIRLS THUR, JUNE 23 & FRI, JUNE 24	 FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS SAT, JUNE 25	 BELA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES FRI, JULY 8	 THE FAB FAUX SAT, JULY 9	 COURT YARD HOUNDS FRI, JULY 15
 JOHN HAMMOND DUKE ROBILLARD SAT, JULY 16		 JOHNNY LANG SAT, JULY 23	 PUNCH BROTHERS FRI, AUG 5	 TOAD THE WET SPROCKET SAT, AUG 6	
 RICKIE LEE JONES FRI, AUG 12	 JOHN GORKA LUCY KAPLANSKY ELIZA GILKYSEN SAT, AUG 13	 SHAKESPEARE'S MEASURE FOR MEASURE SUN, AUG 14	 MAVIS STAPLES FRI, AUG 19	 EILEEN IVERS SAT, AUG 20	 GREAT BIG SEA FRI, AUG 26
 STEVEN PAGE OF BARENAKED LADIES SAT, AUG 27	 GREGG ALLMAN & FRIENDS TUES, AUG 30	 RICHARD THOMPSON FRI, SEPT 2	 MATISYAHU SAT, SEPT 3	 WARREN HAYNES FRI, SEPT 9	 32ND ANNUAL BANJO & FIDDLE CONTESTS SAT, SEPT 10

Lowell Events



Concerts in Boardinghouse Park

Jim Higgins

Lowell Photography Contest

May 1 - September 1

Explore the City and the Park through the lens of your camera and participate in the biennial photography contest. Photographs of any historical, cultural, or natural subject will be accepted. This year’s contest includes two special submission categories for photos featuring historic preservation or cultural activities. Win prizes, earn recognition, and help document the visual heritage of Lowell Information: www.nps.gov/lowe/

Riverfest

Saturday, June 11, 2 PM -6 PM

Come to the Concord River Greenway Park and Middlesex Community College in historic downtown Lowell for a day of education, art, music and fun! Spend the day with your family enjoying fun activities and learning about Lowell’s long relationship with its rivers and canals. Listen to live music, participate in recycled art-making activities and more! The Concord River Greenway Park is located just off of 30 East Merrimack Street. Information: (978) 934-0030.

African Festival

Saturday, June 18, 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Sampas Pavilion, 550 Pawtucket Boulevard
Join your neighbors for a great day of music, food , and crafts representing Africa. Information: www.africanfestivalowell.org

Lowell Al Fresco

June 24 - August 26, Fridays

Celebrate the warm summer nights in downtown Lowell with outdoor dining, retail shopping, live music, entertainment, and more, every Friday throughout the summer! Enjoy street performers, sidewalk sales, patio dining at select restaurants, the City ArtWalk, the Lowell Farmer’s Market, and the renowned Lowell Summer Music Series! Information: www.cultureiscool.org

Lowell Quilt Festival

August 11 - 13

The Lowell Quilt Festival, held annually for the benefit of the New England Quilt Museum, features a juried quilt show with cash prizes in several categories, an exhibit of antique quilts, classes and lectures by nationally acclaimed teachers, auctions of quilts and quilt-related items, quilt appraisals, and vendors of quilting supplies from New England and beyond. Information: www.lowellquiltfestival.org

Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival

Saturday, August 20

The 13th annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, along the Merrimack River at the Lowell Heritage State Park Vandenberg Esplanade and Sampas Pavilion, celebrates the cultural and environmental importance of water to the lives of Cambodians, Laotians, and other nationalities who have moved to Lowell. Many of the events, including the exciting boat races, music, dance, and food, mirror the traditional festival events that take place in their homeland. Information: www.lowellwaterfestival.org

Immigrant Food Traditions

Thursday, September 8, 7-10 pm

Come hear Beryl Rosenthal talk about New York Jewish pickle traditions. Then watch a portrayal of the legendary pickle man in a screening of *Crossing Delancey*. Information: 978-970-5000

25TH LOWELL FOLK FESTIVAL

Friday, July 29 - Sunday, July 31, 2011

Join the over 2 million people who have attended the Lowell Folk Festival over the last two decades. The largest free folk festival in the country returns to Lowell in 2011.



In 2011, the Festival’s lineup includes traditional musicians from genres including bluegrass, folk, world, gospel, dance and others. Traditional artisans will conduct demonstrations and discuss the role of the master/apprentice relationship and their work in the realm of ceramics, carving, print-making and smithing. Lowell area community organization volunteers will sell delicious ethnic foods at about twenty booths around the festival.

A family friendly event, the Lowell Folk Festival presents an international array of folk music, ethnic foods, craftspeople and artisans as well as kid’s activities to enthusiastic New England audiences every summer for twenty-five years. Admission is free, performances located at outdoor stages throughout downtown Lowell.

Information, Schedules, Artist Lineup:
www.lowellfolkfestival.org or call (978) 970-5200

Immigrant Food Traditions Cont’d

Saturday, September 10, 2-5 pm

Come join us on a tour to several of Greater Lowell’s ethnic markets, followed by a talk. We will be joined by Jane Zigelman, author of *97 Orchard* Street, an exploration of immigrant food traditions in New York’s Lower East Side. Information: 978-970-5000

32nd Annual Banjo and Fiddle Contest

Saturday, September 10, 12-6pm

Come to Boarding House Park and celebrate three decades of traditional music at the Park’s longest running public event. Hear 100 contestants competing in 8 categories of styles. This great, free day of food, fun and music will leave a smile on your face and your feet tapping. Information: Call Ranger Alex Demas, (978) 970-5000.

Lowell Celebrates Kerouac & Lowell “Undiscovered”

October 6 - 9

Join Lowell National Historical Park and Lowell Celebrates Kerouac! in celebrating the life and works of Jack Kerouac. Special tours and events will include walking tours to the places Kerouac wrote about while growing up in Lowell in the 1930’s. Lowell “Undiscovered” showcases new and emerging artists within the City. More information: (978) 970-5200 & www.cultureiscool.org

Lowell Open Studios

October 1 - 2, 11 AM - 5 PM

This year’s event features more than 140 artists who live and work in this renaissance city including fiber artists, painters, multi-media artists, sculptors, potters, jewelers, filmmakers, photographers, and more. Open Studios lets you meet artists where they work, view their art, talk with and ask questions of them. Information: www.lowellopenstudios.org



Boat Tour on the Pawtucket Canal

Jim Higgins

Tours

Explore Lowell’s historic mills, canals and rivers via a ranger led tour using park trolleys and boats. Some walking is required – wear comfortable shoes. Tours take place rain or shine – dress accordingly.

Working the Water Boat Tour

Who dug the canals? Who worked the locks and gates? Discover the human force behind the power of the canal system on this 90-minute tour on the Pawtucket Canal.

Engineering Innovation Boat Tour

The city of Lowell, its mills and canal system have been the site of exciting technological innovations throughout its long history. Discover why Lowell was once called a “living laboratory” on this two-hour canal tour.

Transforming Landscapes Boat Tour

From 1796 to the present, the Lowell canal system has played a role in changing the land around it, transforming the area from a farming community to thriving city. This hour and a forty-five minute tour follows the Pawtucket Canal to explore the remarkable changes that have occurred along its banks over the last 200 years.

The “Full Works” Boat Tour

Discover the relationships between the canals, the mills and the workers on this comprehensive 3-hour tour that will explore Lowell’s many waterways, gatehouses and mill complexes.

Evening Boat Cruise

Pack up a brown bag supper for a relaxing evening cruise. Dine on the boat, check for wildlife, learn about the early uses of the river, and take in the sights and sounds of this remarkable water resource. No alcoholic beverages permitted.

Views of Lowell Trolley Tour

Join a park ranger and learn about the downtown locks and canal structures; explore the relationship of the river to the power and production of the industrial city; or learn about the lives of Lowell’s famous “mill girls.” Tour travels primarily by trolley with some walking. Monday through Friday in the Spring and Fall (60 minutes) and daily in Summer (40 minutes). *Free.*

Controlling Nature Trolley Tour

Lowell’s founder had a plan to control the Merrimack River to power the mills. Travel by trolley and foot to learn how waterpower “works” to turn turbines and power machinery, while discovering some of the consequences of industrializing the river on this 90-minute tour. *Free.*

Boat Tour Fees

Prices range from \$6 - \$10 per person, depending on tour. Children 5 and under free. See opposite page for details.

Reservations are required for all canal boat tours. Boat tour schedules and itineraries may be modified at any time depending on water levels. All boat tour reservations must be ticketed and paid for no later than thirty minutes before the start of the tour. Unclaimed reservations will be released and sold to waiting visitors. Tours schedules will be modified during the Lowell Folk Festival, July 29-31st.

Special Tours and Programs

Unique Park Experiences

Park rangers offer a variety of special public tours and programs throughout the summer season. These programs range from historic/natural walking tours to evening education programs and to guided activities.

Inquire at the Visitor Center, the Boott Cotton Mill Museum, or call (978) 970-5000 for special program schedules and information.



Jim Higgins

Tour the Park on the Free Trolley

Exhibit and Tour Schedule



SPRING		SUMMER			FALL
May 28–June 17	June 18-24	June 25– Aug 21*	Aug 22–Sept 5	Sept 6–Oct 10	
<div>Exhibit Hours</div> <div>VISITOR CENTER 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>MILL GIRLS & IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT 1:30 PM – 5:00 PM Daily</div>	<div>VISITOR CENTER 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>MILL GIRLS & IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT 1:30 PM – 5:00 PM Daily</div>	<div>VISITOR CENTER 9:00 AM – 5:30 PM Daily 9:00 AM – 6:30 PM Thur/Fri</div> <div>BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>MILL GIRLS & IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>LOWER LOCKS 11:30 AM - 4 PM, Daily</div>	<div>VISITOR CENTER 9:00 AM – 5:30 PM Daily</div> <div>BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>MILL GIRLS & IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT 1:00 – 5:00 PM Daily</div>	<div>VISITOR CENTER 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM Daily</div> <div>MILL GIRLS & IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT 1:30 PM – 5:00 PM Daily</div>	
<div>Guided Tours</div> <div>Views of Lowell Trolley Tour Monday - Friday: 2:30 PM (60-75 mins)</div>	<div>Views of Lowell Trolley Tour Daily: 10AM (40 mins)</div>	<div>Views of Lowell Trolley Tour Daily: 10AM (40 mins)</div>	<div>Views of Lowell Trolley Tour Daily: 10AM (40 mins)</div>	<div>Views of Lowell Trolley Tour Monday - Friday: 2:30 PM (60 mins)</div>	
<div>Working the Water Boat Tour Sat, Sun, & Memorial Day, 11AM, 12, 2, & 3:00 PM (1hr 30 mins)</div>	<div>Working the Water Boat Tour Daily: 11AM, 2, 3PM (1hr 30 mins)</div>	<div>Working the Water Boat Tour Daily: 11AM (1hr 30 mins)</div>	<div>Working the Water Boat Tour Daily: 11AM (1hr 30 mins)</div>	<div>Working the Water Boat Tour Sat/Sun: 11AM Columbus Day: 11AM, (1hr 30 mins)</div>	
	<div>Engineering Innovation Boat Tour Daily: 12PM (2 hours)</div>	<div>Engineering Innovation Boat Tour Daily: 12PM (2 hours)</div>	<div>Engineering Innovation Boat Tour Daily: 12PM (2 hours)</div>	<div>Engineering Innovation Boat Tour Sat/Sun: 12PM Columbus Day: 12PM (2 hours)</div>	
		<div>Transforming Landscapes Boat Tour Daily: 2, 3PM (1 hr 45min)</div>	<div>Transforming Landscapes Tour Daily: 2, 3PM (1 hr 45min)</div>	<div>Transforming Landscapes Tour Sat/Sun/Columbus Day: 2, 3PM (1 hr 45min)</div>	
		<div>Controlling Nature Trolley Tour Daily: 2:30PM (1 hr 30 mins)</div>			
		<div>Evening Boat Cruise Thur/Fri: 6PM (2 hours)</div>			
		<div>The “Full Works” Tour July 2nd, 10th, 23rd Aug. 7th, 13th, 21st, 2:30 PM (3 hours)</div>			

*Schedules will be modified during the Lowell Folk Festival, July 29-31.

Boat Tour Fees

Working the Water, Engineering Innovation, Evening Cruise, Transforming Landscapes

- Adults: \$8.00; Seniors: \$7.00 (Ages 62+)
- Youths: \$6.00 (Ages 6 -16)
- Children: Free (Ages 5 and under)

The “Full Works” Boat Tour

- Adults: \$10.00; Seniors: \$9.00 (Ages 62+)
- Youths: \$8.00 (Ages 6 -16)
- Children: Free (Ages 5 and under)

Museum Fees

Boott Cotton Mills Museum

- Adults: \$6.00; Seniors: \$4.00 (Ages 62+)
- Youths and Students: \$3.00 (Ages 6 -16)
- Children: Free (Ages 5 and under)
- Group Rates Available. National Park Pass discount.

Buy a "Park Package"

Combine a canal tour with a visit to the Boott Cotton Mills Museum and receive a discount.

Group Rates

Call (978) 970-5000 to request special group rates.